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ABSTRACT

A summary of the Select Seminar II for the development of innovative practically implemented teacher evaluation practices is provided in this report. Two central concerns are linking teacher evaluation to professional growth, and establishing collegial relationships. Discussion topics include: the relationship between teacher evaluation and professional growth; teachers' perceptions of their roles and administrators' roles; administrators' perceptions of their roles and teachers' roles; and the formulation of processes to create the ideal evaluation program. Discussions conclude that teachers must play a greater role in the teacher evaluation process. Effective implementation of an ideal program must be based on the formation of cooperative partnerships between teachers and administrators. Five district proposals for workable teacher evaluation programs that enhance professional growth are included. (LMI)

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A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE: A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Report of the Select Seminar on Teacher Evaluation II

December 1986

Sponsored by:

The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA)

School of Education, University at Albany

State University of New York

Preface

In the spring of 1985 nine master teachers and nine building principals from eighteen school districts were invited to participate in a five-day seminar on teacher evaluation. The purpose of the seminar was to provide the opportunity for these educators to discuss this highly controversial issue and arrive at conclusions relying primarily on their own considerable knowledge and experience. The results of their work have been published in the booklet *A View from the Inside: A Report of The Select Seminar on Teacher Evaluation.*

Select Seminar II on Teacher Evaluation came about as a result of the success of Seminar I. The structure and schedule of the two seminars were almost identical, five days spread over three months. Unlike Seminar I, however, the participants in Seminar II were members of teams of teachers and administrators from six school districts. The goal of Seminar I was to consider teacher evaluation and arrive at some conclusions and recommendations. Seminar II sought, in addition to providing a forum for thoughtful deliberations, to facilitate the development of innovative evaluation practices which could be implemented in the participating schools and shared with others. This report presents both a summary of the deliberations of Select Seminar on Teacher Evaluation II and abstracts of the proposed innovative practices developed by the participating school district teams.

We extend our appreciation to Warren Applegate, Catherine Manupella, and Kevin McCann for their editorial assistance.

Select Seminar on Teacher Evaluation II

East Greenbush

Dorothy Berrier	Science Teacher
Kevin McCann	English Teacher
Glenn Olf	Science Teacher
Edward Szado	Superintendent

Hudson

Shailer Evans	Teaching Assistant Principal
Cynthia Hall	Music Teacher
Neil Howard	Superintendent
Catherine Manupella	Curriculum Coordinator K-12
Jean Smith	Special Education Teacher
R. Jeremy Tschudin	Social Studies Teacher

Niskayuna

Carolyn Akland	4th Grade Teacher
Ronald Beauchemin	English Coordinator, Middle School
Raymond Pressman	Principal
Debbie Wein	English Teacher

Rensselaer

Nancy Andress	Assistant to Superintendent
Lynn Higgins	Department Chairperson, 6th Grade
Michael Kondratowicz	Department Chairperson, 7th Grade
Cristine Lonnstrom	4th Grade Teacher
Kathy Mrozak	Elementary Principal
Johanna Shogan	Team Leader, Grade 8
Stephen Urgenson	Superintendent
Mary VanDerzee	Administrative Intern
Anne Walsh	Department Chairperson, Language Arts

Participants

Rensselaer BOCES

Lynn Corbin	Social Worker
Diane Keating	Special Education Teacher
Nancy McKillip	Special Education Teacher
Ann Myers	Deputy Superintendent
Bruce O'Connell	Evaluation Specialist
Daniel Place	Principal/Coordinator
Micheline Wilson	Special Education Teacher

Schodack

Warren Applegate	English Teacher
Jim Butterworth	Superintendent
Ralph DiMarino	High School Principal
Jerry Friends	Elementary Principal
Dean Jamason	6th Grade Teacher
Tom VerGow	4th Grade Teacher

Seminar Coordinators

Richard Bamberger, Executive Director, Capital Area School Development Association

Nelson Armlin, Associate Director, Capital Area School Development Association

Richard Clark, Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Statistics, School of Education, University at Albany

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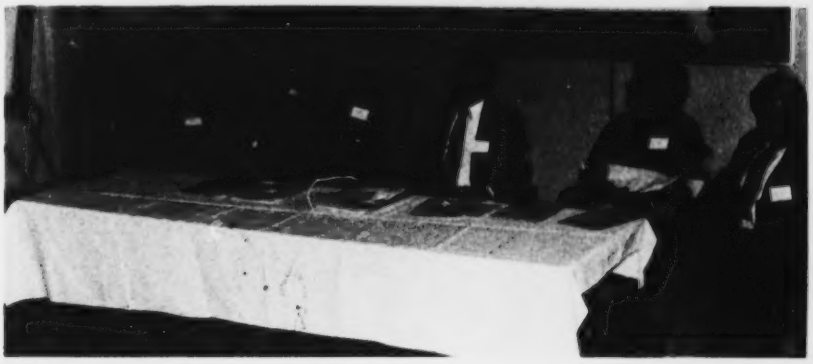

A View from the Inside:

Much of the current debate on Excellence in Teaching focuses upon the need to attract better candidates to the profession, the need to keep quality teachers in the profession, and the need to upgrade curriculum standards. Select Seminars I and II have had a more internal interest and are concerned with ways of making the routine evaluation of teaching practices an instrument for the improvement of teaching. Both seminars examined the structure in which teacher evaluation takes place and the meaning current procedures have for all participants. The report of the Select Seminar I, entitled "A View From the Inside," provided a set of observations and recommendations on the current practice of teacher evaluation. Seminar I recognized the need to progress from the analytical or purely theoretical level of discussion to a more practical agenda. The second seminar on teacher evaluation, Select Seminar on Teacher Evaluation II, was conceived as a conversation among practicing professionals centering upon the requirements for an effective teacher evaluation policy in keeping with the Regents Action Plan's requirement for the Annual Performance Review and the obstacles likely to be encountered in an effort to institute such a plan.

Whereas the earlier seminar had been concerned with bringing a wide range of practicing professionals together for the purpose of sharing experiences, the focus of Seminar II was more narrow and pragmatic—to encourage each of the participating districts to initiate a workable teacher evaluation program.

Five districts participated, and each was charged with developing a specific teacher evaluation plan that would be suited to its unique needs. The seminar process provided each district with access to other districts engaged in a similar activity, and thus the "conversations" between the districts took on a more meaningful quality as each district wrestled with similar problems and served as a resource for other schools. Districts were thus able to function as readily available resources for each other. The format included representatives from all areas pertinent to teacher evaluation (district administrators, building administrators, supervisors, and teachers), and the process provided ample opportunity for interaction among the role groups and districts.

A Look to the Future

The need for district autonomy in developing an effective program became even clearer as the differences among the participating districts (large suburban, small rural, small city, and a decentralized BOCES) surfaced. But the seminar also recognized that the very process of developing a teacher evaluation plan must encompass the basic cooperation needed for such a plan to work. No effective plan can be imposed upon teachers, and the seminar participants agreed that all "players" must be involved, thus must have ownership, in developing the program.

There are, however, two central problems that emerged during the discussions. The first is a concern for putting "value back into evaluation," for linking teacher evaluation to the improvement of teaching and to a well articulated program of professional growth. Teacher evaluation as currently practiced is too often limited to a procedure for determining if anything is wrong in the classroom. Professional growth has traditionally had a similar narrow focus, concentrating more on subject matter expertise or on theoretical issues than on the actual practice of teaching. The theme of uniting teacher evaluation and professional growth came to dominate the discussions. Participants recognized that an effective teacher evaluation program would necessitate a breakdown in the rigid role structures that have ruled the profession. Administrators would need to support more open attitudes toward sharing decision making with teachers. And teachers, themselves, would have to abandon the isolation that has traditionally kept them from engaging in professional dialogue with other teachers and administrators. The second "theme" of the seminar derived from the first and concerned the difficulties of establishing a collegial working atmosphere where criticism is valued and evaluation is an ongoing and continuous process.

Both Seminar I and Seminar II recognized that an effective teacher evaluation program had to be more than an annual inspection and report. What is needed is a process that opens teaching and teachers to the many possibilities for improvement that are always present. Teacher isolation, a situation that is encouraged by current procedures, keeps teachers from the ongoing sources of support and non-threatening criticism.

A View from the Inside:

In discussing the problems associated with implementing an effective and workable plan for teacher evaluation, the seminar generated a number of critical questions and responses. These included:

1. What does teacher evaluation as currently practiced contribute to professional growth?
2. How do teachers perceive their role and the role of administrators in the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?
3. How do building administrators perceive their role and the role of teachers in the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?
4. How do central office administrators perceive their role and the role of teachers in the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?
5. What would be an ideal program of teacher evaluation for professional growth?
6. What changes would be necessary to achieve the ideal state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?

This dialectic formed the basic argument for this report and established a framework for each district's approach to developing a program. A second section providing a synopsis of each district's "tentative" plan is included. It must be stressed that these plans are formative and are subject to modification, and that they represent different stages of development.

The discussions centering on teacher evaluation that the seminar generated show clearly that the subject of teacher evaluation is linked to the issues of teaching as a profession. The sharing and cooperation that created a productive atmosphere in the seminar should serve as a model for the respect and trust that must flourish if evaluation is to be a means to growth. This report has the modest aim of sharing its conversations and conclusions with interested colleagues in the hopes of contributing to the general movement for the improvement of teaching.

QUESTION #1
What does teacher evaluation as currently practiced contribute to professional growth?

—Each role group and school district described the present teacher evaluation process as ineffectual, inadequate, and unrelated to staff development. The characterizations differed slightly, but all reflected a common theme—Dissatisfaction. Currently evaluation functions merely to fulfill the requirements for the Annual Performance Review.

—Teacher evaluation as currently practiced does not utilize the expertise of staff; no provisions are made for interaction with experienced colleagues who could provide advice and guidance.

> "Once you get into teaching, it is 'ok—take it and teach.' That is really hard. Something must be done for new teachers to have interaction with those who have been teaching so we can build on it."

A building administrator observes an experienced teacher on the average of once a year. The cellular structure of schools permits few opportunities for collegial interaction. "Inspection" describes what is presently labeled as teacher evaluation for staff development.

> "If it is going to happen once a year, what good is it? It serves no function except to make sure that kids aren't hanging the teacher."

QUESTION #2

How do teachers perceive their role and the role of administrators in the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?

—Teachers feel isolated from both the evaluation process and from those activities typically labeled "staff development." Evaluation is something "done to" teachers.

> "Evaluation is seen as strictly punitive by many, and 'staff development' seems to be labeled as a separately distinct process."

Teachers feel that many administrators who evaluate them are not qualified as practitioners. Frequently, administrators neither recognize effective teaching nor are they able to train teachers in effective techniques.

—Teachers express their deepest resentment over the fact that their knowledge as practitioners is not recognized, valued, or utilized. They feel they are seen as "children" in a paternalistic hierarchy which tells them what is good and bad, and how to behave.

> "Currently teachers are subservient and quiet. This is not a healthy self-concept. They should be treated as adults."

—Teachers feel they are isolated and unable to benefit from collegial interaction. They are not permitted to participate as partners in their own professional growth. While the compliant and weak feel comfortable within the rigidity of current evaluation practices, the vigorous and competent feel stifled and frustrated.

Although dissatisfied with the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth, teachers did state a need for inspection, if for no other reasons than to fulfill legal contractual obligations and to serve as a means of spot checking classrooms. Local requisites imposed on teachers and building administrators from boards of education, districts' central offices, and teacher contracts also presently discourage teachers from being active participants in their own evaluations.

But underlying the agreement to the current practiced administrative inspection is an underlying expectation from both teachers and administrators in Select Seminar II that the professional expertise of teachers should be both recognized and utilized in future teacher evaluation for professional growth plans.

QUESTION #3

How do building administrators perceive their role and the role of teachers in the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?

Building administrators are the supervisors of classroom teachers. They are state certified to supervise; boards of education and superintendents of schools charge them with this responsibility. For most teachers this supervision is done formally once a year using a prescribed instrument, often a checklist. The intent is to monitor for potentially serious problems and to document on serious offenders. Although they play the role of the inspector, many building administrators are not comfortable in this position. They also raised the issue of their qualifications to evaluate classroom teachers at every level and subject area.

> "We (principals) talked about the role of the principal, about the kind of training that principals get. In fact, who is to say what makes a principal able to evaluate? There really has to be training in evaluation."

Since the role of inspector is channeled down, building administrators saw the necessity for boards of education to be committed to evaluation as a system of improving the total process and product which is part of a district plan. If teachers are frustrated, so are building administrators. They feel a greater need for support coming to them from their boards of education, superintendents and central office staff. They also support increased teacher involvement as an essential part of any effective evaluation system, as the end product is the development of professionals. Time, training, and resources are essential if the building administrator is to develop a systematic approach to evaluation which reflects the philosophy, goals, objectives, and values of the staff and the district.

QUESTION #4

How do central office administrators perceive their role and the role of teachers in the present state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?

> "Evaluation in our district has no relation whatsoever to the improvement of teaching. It serves two purposes. One is to meet contractual obligations of one observation per year and to make an administrative presence in the class once a year. The other is to weed out people who do not meet our standards."

The central office group saw evaluation as having two functions, i.e.: inspection and staff development, functions which may be in conflict with each other, or at least, may require different approaches.

The central office administrators were extremely sensitive to due process and contractual obligations. The perception of the need to protect the district from incompetence forces them to concentrate on the negative function of evaluation which is in conflict with recognizing and promoting effective teaching for professional growth.

This group recognized the need for time, resources, and teacher involvement if the potential results of staff development were to be realized. The central office group accepted that since it is not feasible to ask for an increased cadre of administrators, there should be more teacher time, and more peer involvement if evaluation is to promote staff development.

QUESTION #5
What would be an ideal program of teacher evaluation for professional growth?

"The most important commodity is credibility."

—The "ideal" program of teacher evaluation for professional growth would be one in which there is active teacher participation in a continual process of professional development—a carefully considered and constructed program in which the process of teacher evaluation evolves as a crucial segment WITHIN the teacher's professional growth. The primary goals of the program would be teacher improvement, not merely teacher inspection.

—The "ideal" program would be one based on a trust relationship between administrators and teachers—a system wherein either through formal negotiation or through informal agreement, the present power and responsibility relationships within the evaluation process are aligned (or re-aligned) to permit teachers to participate in their own evaluations and in the professional growth of others. In this delegation of responsibility and trust, teachers, too, must come to accept and practice an active role in professional growth through self-evaluation, in working with administrators in evaluating their own growth areas, and in working with colleagues and administrators in assisting the professional growth of other teachers.

—In the "ideal" program only trained and qualified individuals, selected in a process insuring teacher input and recommendation, would conduct staff development programs and evaluate classroom teachers.

—"Ideal" teacher supervision would be differentiated and adaptive. Beginning teachers, carrying a reduced load, would be assigned a mentor teacher. Corrective supervision would be used for those teachers identified as experiencing problems. Peripheral supervision should be available for the self-motivated professionals who design their own program of self-development. Supervision would reflect the belief that teaching is a complex and dynamic act and as such it would be recognized that there are no "quick fixes" or all-inclusive modes of teaching.

—In essence, the "ideal" program of teacher evaluation for professional growth calls for the development of genuine collegiality supported by "legal" agreements and processes mutually arrived at and supported by the entire professional community within a school district. Administrators and teachers would no longer be adversaries. Instead they would be partners in the decision making process. As partners they truly would assume ownership of the process. The supportive atmosphere would be built on a foundation created by enhancing the teacher role. The value and the knowledge of the practicing professionals would be recognized.

> "Change the image of evaluation from 'the sword' over one's head to an opportunity to enhance the teacher's expertise."

QUESTION #6
What changes would be necessary to achieve the ideal state of teacher evaluation for professional growth?

Schools must become institutions that facilitate cooperation for the formulation and achievement of institutional goals—goals which must equate to better teaching for students. The participants of Select Seminar II sought solutions to an existing inadequate model for teacher evaluation for professional growth. Novel solutions require novel organizational schemes:

1. As has been discussed, existing relationships between and among role groups must change—role boundaries must be eliminated:

> "Too many 'professionals' accept/cling to stereo-typical definitions of roles, and there will be substantial resistance to teacher (peer) evaluation from both groups."

Leadership should not be based on position; instead it should be based on knowledge and ability. All teachers and administrators must be involved in the process of change.

2. Open and continuous communications must become the mainstay of revising present systems, of monitoring and adjusting future systems, and of involving teachers and administrators through continual professional growth.

> "You go back to face the fact that others are at step one, and it will be a battle to get acceptance for any change."

3. School districts should consider ways in which the skills of superior teachers best could be used to improve education for professional growth while keeping these superior teachers primarily in the classroom. Plans for released time from the classroom and for compensating superior teachers for playing diverse roles in the system should be developed.

4. Teachers who will evaluate and train other teachers must be thoroughly trained themselves. School districts should consider training programs, released time, and compensation for the training of superior teachers which relates to the science and art of the teaching process and the effective transfer of this knowledge to other teachers. Furthermore, teachers who will evaluate and train others must be provided opportunity to practice their specialized training in order to internalize conceptual knowledge and to model expertise for their colleagues.

5. Rules and regulations ranging from state mandates to local regulations that too narrowly define what teachers and administrators can and cannot do must be re-formulated. Collective bargaining and the inappropriate labor-management relationship it often fosters must be re-examined within each school district to isolate negotiations as much as possible from professional growth activities.

6. The cellular structure of most schools which insulates and isolates teachers from each other and does little to encourage the creation of professional partnerships must be modified. Professionals thrive on variety—creative teaching schedules and professional growth situations should be mutually created by teachers and administrators.

7. Change should be evolutionary. It is important to note that the needs of all cannot and should not be met with a single approach. It is not necessary for all to choose one designated method. Perhaps it is best to design a program containing various professional growth options for the consideration of responsible professionals.

> "Peer observations should be implemented gradually beginning with voluntary involvement but including goals for total involvement of staff. Or these could be options for an alternative plan for anyone really opposed to peer observations."
>
> "You must let the comfort level grow."

CONCLUSION

Teachers must play a greater role in the teacher evaluation process than they have previously been permitted to play or have previously accepted. The participants of Select Seminar II recognize that it is essential to the professional growth of teachers that they participate in their own evaluations and assist in evaluating and training their peers. Select Seminar II recognizes that not only is it necessary that teachers be trained in good teaching techniques as a critical feature of ongoing staff development but that trained teachers also need to share their expertise. Teacher evaluation must evolve away from punitive inspection to emerge as a crucial process within the professional growth of teachers.

As noted in the discussion of an "ideal" program, major changes are suggested in the ways teachers and administrators perceive themselves and act in relation to those perceptions. Throughout Select Seminar II every building administrator participant was anxious to form a cooperative partnership with teachers—partnerships which would permit a greater degree of sharing with teachers in the evaluation process and which, in essence, would provide the administrator with a more efficient and supportive institution in which to perform his many other tasks. As teachers assume responsibilities, they will realize a greater sense of control in their workplace. The development of collegial interaction as a routine feature of professional life will establish peers as valued resources in the transmission of professional theory and technique.

The "impenetrable barriers" between teacher roles and administrator roles must be seen as flexible, insubstantial, and impermanent. Determined focus on professional rapport within school districts, and most importantly, within individual school buildings, holds the hope for the evolutionary process of open, honest professional growth.

Preface to District Plans

Five Proposals for Teacher Evaluation for Professional Growth

The aim of Select Seminar II was to help put theory into practice—each district initiated a workable teacher evaluation program for the fall of 1986. A summary of each district's evaluation program is presented as the concluding segment of this report. But it is crucial that these summaries are not seen as the conclusive effort or final plan or "ideal" plan for any of these districts. Each district represented found itself at a different stage of dialogue, spirit, and development in preparing a plan which would be acceptable to the teachers, administrators, and board of education in its local situation.

It would be ill advised to assume a hierarchy of value to be indicated by the degree of apparent sophistication or complexity of any of these plans. Rather, each reflects a workable program for teacher evaluation at a given time, in a given educational climate for a specific institution. Each of these programs will be reviewed and revised as part of the continuing process of professional growth within each district.

Hudson City School District

Contact Person: Mr. Neil Howard, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson City School District, 360 State Street, Hudson, NY 12534

Description of District:

The Hudson City School District is an enlarged small city school district located in Columbia County, 40 miles south of Albany on the Hudson River. As the county seat, the school population is reflective of the services available; i.e. Social Services, Unemployment Office, Low Rent Housing, Public Health Office, etc. As an enlarged city school district, students are from urban, suburban and rural areas with a variety of social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions which influence their education. The district has five buildings: three K-5; one 6-8; and one 9-12. 190 professional staff members serviced 2,460 students during the 1985-86 school year: 16 percent of the students are from minority groups, approximately 30 percent qualify for remediation, 10 percent have gone through the Committee on the Handicapped, and seven percent of grades 1-6 are in the Gifted Program.

Statement of Philosophy:

The Hudson City School System has a basic commitment to staff development. A key part of this concept is the peer support program. The improvement of instruction through professional growth is the goal.

Proposed Plan of Teacher Evaluation:

The Hudson City School District has developed a plan of action to promote and encourage professional growth for Hudson teachers. The key elements in this Peer Supervision Program, as outlined below, will begin slowly at the building level. There will be a periodic review of our program through the Staff Development Committee already in place. It is anticipated that the beginning stages of the Peer Supervision Program will be in place for the opening of school in September. Errors and mistakes may be made along the way, but the committee is willing and eager to take the risk, for the rewards will be great—more effective teaching—better education for the children.

1. The district will hold a staff development conference day.
2. Staff development portfolios with professional articles will begin distribution (8-week period).
3. Staff developent committees in each building will hold a "View from the Inside" discussion based on the questions posed in the pamphlet.
4. Each building, through the staff development committee, will create a peer support process/project.
5. Teachers new to the district will be required to participate in the building's peer support project.
6. Other untenured teachers will be encouraged to participate in the peer support program.
7. Tenured teachers will be encouraged to participate in peer visitations and time will be provided.
8. Training will be provided for those participating as consultants in the building projects.
9. Follow-up review sessions will be held periodically to evaluate the projects and process.
10. This experiment will be supported formally and informally by the teachers, the administration, and the board.
11. Peer visitations will not be recorded, nor will any information become part of the formal evaluation process.

Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES

Contact Persons: Mr. John Sackett, District Superintendent, Ms. Ann Myers, Deputy District Superintendent, Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES, 1550 Schuurman Road, Castleton, NY 12033

Description of District:

The Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES serves a three county region to the south and east of Albany and provides educational services to the 24 school districts (22 component and 2 non-component) within the region. The school districts range in type and size from small rural, to suburban, to small city schools. There are approximately 38,000 students and 2,700 instructional and/or related service staff within these districts. The BOCES organization employs a staff of 180 instructional and related service professionals to provide direct educational services to approximately 1,600 students in the areas of Special Education, Occupational Education, Alternative Learning Programs, and General Education. In addition, the BOCES provides program planning, development, coordination, and management services to participating school districts.

The wide geographic dispersion of Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES' professional staff has historically hampered efforts within the organization to cooperatively deal with important issues. In effect, the BOCES "building" covers three counties, a factor which certainly has impacted the effectiveness of intraorganizational communication.

Statement of Philosophy:

The goal of all efforts within the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES organization is to maximize the effectiveness of the teaching/learning process. Consequently, we have entered this activity to implement a philosophy that incorporates observation, performance review, and professional development in an effective evaluation process. It is in the mutual best interest of the organization's instructional/and support service staff and management to achieve that result.

Proposed Plan of Teacher Evaluation:

To involve all direct service and administrative staff appropriately, we are planning a multi-year activity:

1. Peer coaching, or peer consultation, would be a valuable ingredient to a revised process. Some givens:
   a. We would not encourage arbitrarily opening doors of classrooms to all peers on an exchange basis.
   b. Peer observations need to be purposefully arranged by both individuals involved and can be either for diagnostic feedback or for modeling.
   c. Peer coaching will be particularly valuable for new teachers.
   d. An after school staff development program in addition to the coaching program should be incorporated for new staff.
   e. Peer observation can be arranged by either administrative recommendation or by an individual request to observe or be observed by another member of the professional staff.
2. There are certain constraints unique to BOCES that impact the development/revision of a Performance Review System. These constraints will determine our outcomes; they include, but are not limited to:
   a. Geographic distance between sites.
   b. Transferability of current evaluation models to the diverse programs offered by BOCES.

c. Frequent location changes of classrooms.
d. Off-site location of administrators.
e. Changes in staff assignments.
f. Financial resources.
g. Relationships with local school districts/buildings.

3. The flexibility of the BOCES staff and organization, and the internal training capacity within BOCES are two strengths which should be incorporated into a Performance Review/Professional Development System.

4. By the end of 1986-87, the district will revise the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES Staff Performance Review Process to reflect professional and developmental needs of staff and administration.

a. Development of a Board Policy on Staff Performance Review to reflect the philosophy of Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES.
b. Revision of the Performance Review Process.
   —Research of alternative models.
   —Voluntary experimentation with model practices.
   —Possible use of State Grant to support a pilot of a Mentor/Teacher/Internship Program for beginning teachers.
   —Analysis and modification of Effective Elements of Instruction Research for potential use in the revised Performance Review Process.
   —Continuation of dialogue with other Seminar districts to broaden the awareness of current practices.
   —Dissemination and discussion of information and ideas among Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES staff.
   —Development of a BOCES Performance Review Process model to submit to Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES staff for recommendations and comments.

Rensselaer City School District

Contact person: Dr. Stephen Urgenson, Superintendent of Schools, Rensselaer City Schools, 555 Broadway, Rensselaer, NY 12144

Description of District:

Rensselaer City School District is a small city school district located on the banks of the Hudson River opposite Albany. The District is comprised of 1,150 students occupying two buildings: K-5 and 6-12, with a staff of 95. The District is reflective of its surroundings which seriously affect the educational growth of many of its students. The income level ranges from middle income to poverty level. Forty percent of the students qualify for remediation, with 14 percent going through the Committee on the Handicapped.

Statement of Philosophy:

The Rensselaer City School District is committed to the professional growth of all staff. Developing a plan to improve instruction and teaching skills will be a cooperative effort of teachers and administration. To effect this professional growth, the district will promote peer counseling. The peer counseling-modeling will be developed by and for teachers with administrative support.

The program of peer consultation will be voluntary; the inservice training will be mandatory to allow for common language. Peer counseling will be completely separate from the administrative evaluation which is a contractual item. This peer consultation system is presented as a way to overcome the inadequacies of the present staff development system to improve instruction. This program will be operated by the faculty itself for the sole purpose of cooperatively working to improve instruction. This exchange of expertise will not only enhance the skills of those teachers involved but will also generate a sense of collegiality, and act as a vehicle to bring teachers out of the isolation that characterizes the profession and move into an atmosphere of experimentation and growth.

The Basic Tenets - Philosophy of Peer Counseling:

1. To provide assistance at the request of any teacher—tenured or probationary.
2. To assist in the professional growth and development of the teachers and has no evaluative nor supervisory function.
3. To give assistance in terms of the teacher's needs, goals, and objectives.
4. To contain no predetermined agenda. There will be no record included in the teacher's file.
5. To provide teachers as resource for the professional growth of peers.
6. To develop long term collegial relationships, mutual trust, and respect to revitalize school climate.

Proposed Plan of Teacher Evaluation:

A Professional Development Committee and the administration will meet to plan inservice for the balance of the school year. They will work on needs for staff development. There will be a meeting to assess the achievements and progress of the peer evaluation process during the 1986-87 year. A survey sheet will be developed. Among items to be explored are: the number of teachers participating, tenure, non-tenure, and new teachers. The Professional Development Committee will again assess the needs for staff development. There will be a presentation of staff development plans for budget purposes.

East Greenbush Central School

Contact Person: Dr. Edward Szado, Superintendent of Schools, East Greenbush Central School, Administration Center, East Greenbush, NY 12061

Description of District:

The East Greenbush Central School District serves a suburban/rural population of approximately 25,000 in southern Rensselaer County comprising the towns of North Greenbush, Sand Lake, Schodack and Nassau. The district's 4,500 students are distributed among four "neighborhood" elementary schools (K-4), two middle schools, Genet School (5-6), and Goff School (7-8), and Columbia High School (9-12). Most of the approximately 300 professional staff members are veterans of the district.

Statement of Philosophy:

Long committed to the principle of teacher involvement in the evaluation process, the district has embarked upon a pilot program to create an evaluative process that promotes peer evaluation among teachers in a collegial atmosphere. A second goal is the establishment of a mentor teacher program in which specially trained teachers with differentiated schedules may function to assist new teachers and any experienced teachers requesting assistance. The district has decided to proceed slowly so that the program may "evolve" of its own initiative through teacher interaction and support. The

ultimate goal is to have all teachers trained and participating in the program.

Proposed Plan of Teacher Evaluation:

The pilot program is to be established at Columbia High School where over 100 teachers and 1500 students interact in a typical suburban high school environment. The high school was chosen for a number of reasons, some of which are listed below:

1. An opportunity to focus on "generic" elements of teaching by promoting interdepartmental interaction.
2. The need to break down the isolation among teachers that normally develops in secondary schools because of size and differentiated subjects.
3. Small or "local" level interactions can be promoted on departmental levels where subject specific elements of teaching can be evaluated and developed.
4. Greater availability of beginner teachers with which to launch a mentor-teacher program.

By the fall of 1986 at least 10 high school teachers will have been trained in the Madeline Hunter Model of Effective Elements of Instruction. This core group of 10 will be expanded throughout the year on the basis of volunteers. The plan is to have an expanding group that will continually interact within itself while reaching out to draw in more participants. The group will establish a schedule of peer visitations and post visit consultations. The district will provide substitute teachers to free participating teachers to observe and confer with others in the group.

Evaluation criteria will include:

1. Number of peer observations and consultations
2. Assessment of the value of ETM training in evaluation
3. Assessment of the value of interdepartmental evaluations
4. Level of staff participation in the program
5. Proposed expansion for following year

Participation in the program is to be voluntary and teachers will not conduct evaluations that bear on employment status. A log of each observation and consultation will be kept and the voluntary participation in the program will be included in a teacher's Annual Performance Review. The district is committed to utilize its teachers as a means to improve the instructional program and believes that increased training and teacher interaction will lead to professional growth and better staff morale.

Schodack Central School

Contact Person: Dr. James Butterworth, Superintendent of Schools, Schodack Central School, 1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, NY 12033

Description of District:

Schodack Central School is located approximately 10 miles south of Albany, New York. Facilities include three school buildings: the Castleton Elementary School (360 pupils K-4), the Maple Hill Middle School (270 pupils 5-8), and Maple Hill High School (360 pupils 9-12). The total professional staff numbers approximately 75.

Statement of Philosophy:

Experienced teachers should know their own needs, should keep growing, and should participate in their own professional growth. Inspection of teachers does not necessarily place emphasis on professional development, especially if a climate of trust in which consensus about educational issues is a desired outcome. Individual goal setting and fulfillment will help individuals develop personally and professionally.

Proposed Plan of Teacher Evaluation:

With the exception of non-tenured teachers in their first year of service, all teachers in the district will work with their supervisor or principal to establish goals, to create processes for goal fulfillment, and to formatively and summatively evaluate attainment of goals. Traditional classroom observation and evaluation will be used only for non-tenured teachers, though administrators will informally observe at any time. As part of the process of a teacher's fulfilling a given goal, an administrator might observe a class to provide data and direction to the teacher: such observation is mutually agreed to in the goal and process section of the Personal/Professional Plan.

The Personal/Professional Plan:

I. Non-tenured teacher:
   A. Year 1: Evaluation based on administrator observation using the Teacher Development Plan, an instrument which has been used for a number of years in the district. The Teacher Development Plan combined narrative commentary and an objective checklist of teacher behaviors.
      Year 2: Tenure: Teacher Development Plan plus limited goal setting (increasing each year) as the untenured teacher develops competence and commitment as an instructor.

II. Tenured Teachers (the process):
   A. Goal Selection (September)
      —Three goals to be selected by the teacher from instructional, curricular, personal, and school goals.
      —Administrator and teacher must mutually agree to the goals.
   B. Process Selection (September-October)
      —Teacher selects processes which will be used to gather data about the goal's fulfillment.
      —Possible choices: courses, informal staff development activities, self-evaluation, peer visitation, student evaluation, invited drop-in observation, audiotaping, videotaping, writing for publication, materials review, etc.
      —For each goal a log will be kept by the teacher documenting activity and responding to the question, "What has happened to the teacher as a result of this interaction?"
      —Administrator and teacher must mutually agree to the process selection.
   C. Formative Evalution (January-February)
      —Feedback and assessment regarding on or off target progress.
      —Administrator and teacher can mutually reformulate goals or processes for goal fulfillment at this time.
   D. Summative Evaluation (June)
      —The written contract of goals and processes constitutes the basis for the annual performance review summative report.
      —Administrator and teacher have input into writing this document.
      —Goals will simply be assessed as achieved, partially achieved or not achieved.

A standing committee to evaluate and revise (as necessary) the Personal/Professional Plan is established. It includes elected teacher representatives from each building, representation from the teacher's association, building administration, and the district superintendent.

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